

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Applicants wish to thank the examiner for the courtesy extended to their representative during telephone interviews conducted on February 4, 2010, February 12, 2010, and February 23, 2010. The participants were Examiner Frank Donado and David Ward, Reg. No. 45198. A summary of the substance of the interviews is noted below.

Claims 18 and 31 have been amended to overcome the applied indefiniteness rejections.

The amendments provided herein were presented to Mr. Donado as proposed amendments during the interviews. Mr. Donado agreed these amendments would overcome the pending indefiniteness rejections.

Mr. Donado further agreed the pending objections would be withdrawn for the following reasons. The Office Action objected to claim 18 for reciting "a first idle time slot" in lines 6 and 17. However, the first idle time slot recited in line 6 is the first one following a received signal that indicates a response is expected or an intent to continue exists, whereas the first idle time slot recited in line 17 is the first one following a received signal that indicates that no response is expected or no intent to continue exists. Because each of the two recited first idle time slots is a first idle time slot following a different received signal, each of the two recited first time slots is distinct from the other and, thus, is properly introduced by an indefinite article (e.g., a). Similar reasoning applies to the two recited second time slots that the Office Action objected to and the objections applied to claim 31.

Accordingly, Mr. Donado acknowledged that the claim amendments provided herein would place the application in condition for allowance.

If any issues remain which may best be resolved through a telephone communication, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

/James Edward Ledbetter/

Date: March 16, 2010
JEL/DWW/att

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